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Report of the Secretary-General on the request of Nepal for United Nations assistance in support of its peace process

I. Introduction

1. The present report is submitted pursuant to Security Council resolution 1909 (2010), by which the Council, following the request of the Government of Nepal and the recommendation of the Secretary-General, renewed the mandate of the United Nations Mission in Nepal (UNMIN) until 15 May 2010. UNMIN was established as a special political mission in 2007 with a mandate that includes the monitoring of the management of arms and armed personnel of the Nepal Army and the Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist) (CPN-M), which is now the Unified Communist Party of Nepal-Maoist (UCPN-M).

2. This report reviews the progress of the peace process and the implementation of the mandate of UNMIN since my last report to the Security Council of 7 January 2010 (S/2010/17).

II. Progress of the peace process

3. The significant achievements of Nepal's peace process, notably the Comprehensive Peace Agreement of 2006, and the election of the Constituent Assembly in 2008, are documented in my previous reports to the Council. Some progress was also made during the reporting period, such as the recent discharge of Maoist army personnel disqualified by the 2007 UNMIN-led verification process and the establishment on 8 January of the high-level political mechanism, the forum for senior political leaders to address key peace process issues. However, despite continuing efforts, no substantive forward movement has been made on the main outstanding tasks of the peace process, namely resolving the future of the two armies and completing the drafting of the constitution by the deadline of 28 May 2010.

4. The high-level political mechanism was initiated and coordinated by the late Nepali Congress leader and four-time Prime Minister, Girija Prasad Koirala, one of the main architects of the peace process. Mr. Koirala's death on 20 March 2010 was widely mourned by the Nepalese people and the international community as a major loss for the country and its peace process. His passing may have injected a renewed sense of shared responsibility among the other political leaders, who have subsequently continued to convene the high-level political mechanism, and jointly

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issued a public statement committing the parties to make efforts towards promulgating the constitution by 28 May in order to take the peace process to its conclusion. The major Madheshi parties have yet to be included in the high-level political mechanism, underscoring their sense of political exclusion.

5. Informally, the main political parties acknowledge that the new constitution is highly unlikely to be completed by the deadline stipulated in the Interim Constitution. Major differences have yet to be resolved on core elements such as the future form of government and the country's federal structure.

6. The prospect of a serious political-constitutional crisis as a result of failure to promulgate the constitution by 28 May has raised concerns among many Nepalis that it could open possibilities for forces opposed to the Comprehensive Peace Agreement and its stated aims to pose new challenges to the peace process. Calls for a return to constitutional monarchy and the 1990 Constitution have been made in recent weeks. In a rare interview, the former King, Gyanendra Shah, stated that the history of the monarchy in Nepal had not come to an end. His remarks were strongly criticized by the President, the Prime Minister and the major political parties, who accused the former King of seeking to resurrect the monarchy. President Yadav has reportedly assured political party leaders that, in the event of the new constitution not being promulgated on time, he would act within the limits of the Constitution and would not take unilateral action. Consensus appears to be emerging for the Constituent Assembly to be extended by at least six months in order to complete its work. The parties are conscious of the urgent need to reach a new consensus on the above-mentioned key points of contention to accompany such an extension.

7. The constitution-making process has become politically entwined with the issue of the establishment of a unity government as well as integration and rehabilitation of Maoist army personnel, which the Interim Constitution had envisaged would be completed within six months of the formation of a new government following the 2008 Constituent Assembly election. While there is broad consensus on the need for a national unity government, there are serious differences on who should lead it. UCPN-M has long called for such a change. This now has the support of many UML parliamentary party members. UCPN-M has made the change of government a precondition for supporting critical pending peace process issues. For their part, the Nepali Congress and UML have insisted that the Maoist army personnel should be integrated and rehabilitated prior to the promulgation of a new constitution and that UCPN-M first renounce the violent activities of the Young Communist League (YCL). They have also demanded that UCPN-M return all government and private property, amid allegations of fresh land seizures during the reporting period. UCPN-M has called for simultaneous progress on the integration and the rehabilitation of Maoist army personnel, on the one hand, and constitution-drafting, on the other.

8. The Special Committee tasked to supervise, integrate and rehabilitate Maoist army personnel has not reached agreement on a proposed action plan, and has referred some of the unresolved issues to the high-level political mechanism. The most contentious issues remain the number of Maoist army personnel to be integrated into the security forces, in particular the Nepal Army, and the modalities for such integration. Meanwhile, the Committee to address the democratization of the Nepal Army, as required by the Interim Constitution, led by the Minister of Defence, has made little, if any, headway in its work.

9. A fresh Army recruitment drive was announced in February, when the Chief of Army Staff reaffirmed the intention of the Ministry of Defence to resume recruitment. In early April, the Ministry of Defence reportedly endorsed the vacancy announcements. UNMIN has once again conveyed its consistent position that any such recruitment, even against vacant posts, would constitute a breach of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement and the Agreement on the Monitoring of the Management of Arms and Armies.

10. Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs B. Lynn Pascoe visited Nepal from 10 to 12 March and met with the Prime Minister, senior Government officials, political and military leaders. He conveyed the strong support of the international community for Nepal's peace process, as well as its serious concern over the lack of progress and the failure of the parties to implement long-overdue commitments. He underlined, in his private and public messages, the urgent need for the parties to break the current political deadlock and to overcome their outstanding differences through a more concerted effort at dialogue and compromise. He also discussed the challenges for UNMIN, which continues to operate under what is now an inadequately narrow mandate, designed several years ago for the main purpose of supporting the Constitutional Assembly election. He conveyed the concern of Security Council members about the repeated extension of the mandate of UNMIN without tangible progress.

11. In line with paragraph 3 of Security Council resolution 1909 (2010), UNMIN has held consultations with the major political parties and the Government regarding possible arrangements for its withdrawal and transfer to the Government of its residual monitoring responsibilities. In the context of these extensive discussions, senior party representatives and Government officials underlined the need for UNMIN to continue its presence and to support the peace process at this critical phase, especially should the 28 May deadline for the completion of the constitution be extended. They have indicated their desire to see UNMIN being more proactive in carrying out its mandate and have expressed their readiness to work closely with the Mission. Among the priorities proposed during these consultations were the enhancement of the UNMIN arms monitoring function and support to the Special Committee in assuming its constitutional responsibility for supervision of the Maoist army cantonments and in the planning and the implementation of the integration of the Maoist army personnel. UNMIN was also urged to assist by facilitating the resolution of impediments to progress as appropriate.

A. Drafting of the constitution

12. In the constitution-drafting process, consensus has been reached on only 3 of 11 thematic papers, and these have been submitted to the Constitutional Committee charged with compiling the full draft of the constitution. With the Constitutional Committee having been unable to meet the 5 March deadline for completing the first draft, the Constituent Assembly's schedule was revised for the tenth time in an attempt to maintain the deadline for promulgation. In early April, the Constituent Assembly Chairman stated that the necessary procedures for promulgating a new constitution could not be completed within the remaining time.

13. Several parties hold strong views on the future federal structure. The Nepali Congress and the Nepal Workers and Peasants Party have protested the delineation

of future federal provinces as proposed by the Constitutional Assembly Committee on State Restructuring and Distribution of State Power. The major Madheshi parties and ethnic groups have also opposed the model, which envisages a division of the Terai region into three separate federal units, claiming that this contradicts what they perceive as their historically demarcated areas. The high-level political mechanism has agreed in principle to set up a cabinet-level State restructuring commission to review the future delineation of federal provinces and to facilitate the work of the Constituent Assembly Committee on State Restructuring and Distribution of State Power. However, its establishment is being hampered by ongoing political differences among the main parties.

14. Views expressed by UCPN-M or its members on important constitutional issues have continued to cause concern about the Maoists' commitment to multi-party democracy. For example, its proposal that under the new State model the Chief Justice and judges of the Supreme Court should be appointed by the Federal Legislature Special Judicial Committee is seen by its critics as being intended to undermine the independence of the judiciary. UCPN-M, for its part, believes that there is little enthusiasm among some in the traditional mainstream parties to pursue the fundamental political, social and economic changes called for in the Comprehensive Peace Agreement.

B. Integration and rehabilitation of Maoist army personnel

15. In January, Prime Minister Madhav Nepal submitted to the Special Committee a 112-day action plan for the integration and rehabilitation of Maoist army personnel, which at the time of writing had yet to be approved. Since discussions in the Special Committee revealed significant points of disagreement among the parties, the Committee requested the high-level political mechanism to take a political decision on the number of Maoist army personnel to be integrated into the security forces, and on the modalities for their integration. No consensus has been reached in the high-level political mechanism, and the Prime Minister tasked the Technical Committee to formulate an expedited action plan for integration and rehabilitation. Discussions have remained inconclusive to date.

16. The Special Committee was also unable to agree on the establishment of a supervisory mechanism and code of conduct for the Maoist army, which were originally proposed by the Technical Committee in September 2009. The Special Committee has agreed in principle on the establishment of a secretariat as a supervisory and oversight body to implement, once agreed, the action plan for the integration and rehabilitation of Maoist army personnel, but the secretariat has yet to be constituted. The Special Committee has asked the Technical Committee to submit proposals on rehabilitation packages for Maoist army personnel who would not be integrated into the security services. Discussions on this issue are still ongoing in the Technical Committee.

17. UCPN-M Chairman Prachanda visited the Shaktikhor cantonment site in Chitwan district in March and addressed Maoist army personnel on political issues relating to the peace process, an action that was condemned by the Nepali Congress and UML as a breach of the Special Committee's code of conduct. Political activity by verified Maoist army personnel is inconsistent with the cantonments coming

under the supervision of the Special Committee. The Nepali Congress and UML claimed that the speech was part of UCPN-M's preparation to "capture state power".

C. Discharge of disqualified Maoist army personnel

18. As agreed in an action plan signed on 16 December 2009, the discharge of Maoist army personnel disqualified in 2007 as minors and late recruits began on 6 January and concluded as scheduled on 8 February 2010. The closing cantonment discharge ceremony in main cantonment site 5, Rolpa, was attended by UCPN-M Chairman Prachanda, members of the diplomatic community, including representatives of the permanent members of the Security Council, the United Nations Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator and members of the United Nations country team, as well as my Representative in Nepal. Of the 4,008 disqualified personnel, 2,394 took part in the discharge process from the seven main cantonment sites. On 23 March, UCPN-M signed a declaration formalizing the discharge of the 1,614 minors and late recruits who were not present in the cantonments during this process.

19. A United Nations monitoring mechanism, led by the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) and financed by the United Nations Peace Fund for Nepal, has been established to monitor and verify compliance by UCPN-M with its commitments under the action plan, including non-re-recruitment, ensuring that minors can freely and independently determine their areas of return or resettlement and, if they so wish, avail themselves of rehabilitation support. Full and sustained adherence by UCPN-M to its obligations in this respect is necessary for the party to be de-listed from the annual report of the Secretary-General on children in armed conflict as a party to conflict recruiting and using children as soldiers.

D. Other challenges affecting the peace process

20. The security situation in the Terai region, where numerous armed groups have continued to operate largely with impunity, has become increasingly precarious, with 62 killings reported between January and March 2010. In January, the Assistant Chief District Officer of the Parsa district was attacked and his bodyguard killed. Responsibility for the attack was reportedly claimed by an armed group.

21. The sometimes violent activities of political party-affiliated youth groups have also remained a source of concern throughout the reporting period. Since January, there has been repeated violence, some of which resulted in deaths, between the UCPN-M-affiliated YCL and other parties, including affiliated youth wings.

22. A general perception exists among many Nepalis that the ongoing political stalemate, coupled with a mixed record of bringing perpetrators to justice, has resulted in increased criminal activities. Leading editors and publishers were subjected to intimidation during the reporting period. In February, a media network owner was gunned down in broad daylight in a popular commercial district of Kathmandu and one month later another high profile media entrepreneur was assassinated in the Janakpur district of the Terai region.

III. Activities of the United Nations Mission in Nepal

A. Arms monitoring

23. The Arms Monitoring Office continued to monitor compliance by the Nepal Army and the Maoist army with the Agreement on the Monitoring of the Management of Arms and Armies. Arms monitors continued round-the-clock surveillance at the Nepal Army weapons storage site in Kathmandu and the weapons storage areas in the seven main cantonment sites of the Maoist army. Regular visits to satellite cantonment sites continued to be undertaken. Other operations were conducted by mobile teams operating from the Arms Monitoring Office headquarters in Kathmandu. At the request of the Ministry of Peace and Reconstruction, arms monitors observed salary payments to Maoist army personnel at the cantonment sites.

24. During the reporting period, the Government of Nepal formally asked UNMIN to provide detailed personal information, including names, addresses and photographs, of verified Maoist army personnel and of disqualified dischargees. While cognizant of the Government's responsibility to ensure that salary payments to Maoist army personnel are made in accordance with its requirements, UNMIN is bound to act consistently with the Agreement on the Monitoring of the Management of Arms and Armies, which stipulates that UNMIN treat such information with appropriate confidentiality. In view of the Government concern about the integrity of its salary payment arrangements for Maoist army personnel, UNMIN convened a meeting of the Joint Monitoring Coordination Committee to discuss the request for information, and facilitated a discussion between the Ministry of Peace and Reconstruction and the Maoist army over the payment modalities for Maoist army personnel.

25. Government officials have also publicly questioned the number of Maoist army personnel in the cantonments, alleging that absence from the cantonments exceeds the authorized limit of 12 per cent. Since October 2009, UNMIN has pressed the Nepal Army and the Maoist army to provide updated figures on their personnel, as specified by the Agreement on the Monitoring of the Management of Arms and Armies. These numbers have been provided to the Joint Monitoring Coordination Committee.

B. Child protection

26. The Child Protection Unit supported the planning for the discharge and rehabilitation of the Maoist army personnel disqualified as minors, and provided advisory support to the United Nations team during the discharge process. It also supported the work of the Nepal task force implementing the monitoring and reporting mechanism established in line with Security Council resolution 1612 (2005), which is co-chaired by UNICEF and OHCHR-Nepal.

C. Political affairs

27. The Political Affairs Office has continued to monitor, analyse and report on the overall political situation and to assist Mission leadership in supporting the peace

process. Political affairs officers maintained regular contacts with a broad range of Government officials, political party representatives, civil society organizations and international actors. The activities of groups opposed to the peace process, their potential to disrupt progress, dynamics among the political parties and the role of traditionally marginalized groups were monitored. The Office followed the proceedings of the Constituent Assembly and the work of its committees in preparing the new constitution. It also led in coordinating United Nations activities with regard to the discharge and the rehabilitation of Maoist army personnel disqualified by the UNMIN-led verification process.

D. Public information

28. The Public Information and Translation Unit continued its work to disseminate media products related to the work of UNMIN. The Unit disseminated UNMIN positions and responses to issues widely debated in the media, including the Government request that UNMIN provide it with personal data on Maoist army personnel. The Unit also provided support to the visit of Under-Secretary-General Pascoe, documented the discharge of disqualified Maoist army personnel and worked closely with the United Nations country team in other media-related matters.

E. Safety and security

29. The security situation of the Mission and its personnel was generally stable during the reporting period. Improvised explosive devices that were reported to have been placed at some government institutions and political party meeting venues were defused and cleared by the local security forces. On 27 January 2010, the Government ordered heightened security at Tribhuvan International Airport in Kathmandu following warnings that Al-Qaida-linked militants were plotting to hijack planes in South Asia. There were no direct threats made against UNMIN or its staff or property during the reporting period.

F. Mission support

30. The mission support component continued to give priority to the work in the seven main Maoist army cantonment sites. The uninterrupted presence of arms monitors in the cantonments and their mobile patrolling require wide deployment of personnel as well as communications and air transport resources.

G. Staffing

31. As at 12 April 2010, 254 of the authorized 278 personnel were serving in the Mission. Out of 189 civilian personnel, 31.7 per cent were women. Of the 54 substantive staff, 40.7 per cent are women, while 27.4 per cent of 135 administrative staff are women. Currently, 5 of the 71 Arms Monitors serving with the Mission are women. Gender representation in this area is dependent on the nomination of candidates by Member States. As a result of UNMIN efforts to recruit national staff

from traditionally marginalized groups, 38.4 per cent of the 125 national staff are from traditionally marginalized groups, and 37.5 per cent are women.

IV. Human rights

32. There has been no substantial progress in addressing impunity and increasing accountability for human rights violations committed during or after the conflict. The Nepal Army has yet to produce before the police the officer accused in the case of torture and killing of a 15-year-old girl, Maina Sunuwar, since his repatriation from the United Nations Mission in the Central African Republic and Chad in December 2009, despite the issuance of an arrest warrant by a district civilian court in January 2008, a formal request by the Nepal Police and calls by the National Human Rights Commission. The leadership of UCPN-M has likewise failed to cooperate with criminal investigations into the involvement of its cadres in serious human rights abuses during and after the conflict, despite assurances to the contrary. The absence of progress in tackling impunity in Nepal was again highlighted by the High Commissioner for Human Rights in her annual report to the Human Rights Council in March 2010 as a major impediment to the successful completion of the peace process.

33. After consultations with human rights organizations, including OHCHR-Nepal, the Government made substantial changes to the draft bill establishing a framework for a truth and reconciliation commission and registered it with the Legislature-Parliament in February. It now awaits consideration by the Legislature-Parliament.

34. On 10 March 2010, three females, including a 12-year-old girl, were shot and killed inside the Bardia National Park by Nepal Army personnel. The Army claimed that the victims were poachers carrying weapons and conducted a court of inquiry that concluded that its personnel acted in self-defence. National human rights institutions, including the National Human Rights Commission, have investigated the case and found that the victims were shot in the back, which appears to contradict the claim of self-defence. The National Human Rights Commission concluded that there was no evidence to suggest that the victims were poachers, and that the Army had "tampered with the evidence" and had used excessive force in dealing with the victims. Under the National Parks and Wildlife Conservation Act, 1973, the relevant national legislation, security forces are authorized to use lethal force even in a situation where there is no immediate threat to life, such as escape attempts. These provisions are incompatible with Nepal's international obligations, including the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.

35. The work of the National Dalit Commission was reactivated in January with the nomination of the Chairperson and members of the Commission by the Cabinet. The position of Chairperson had been vacant since June 2009. Discussions regarding a law to govern the National Human Rights Commission were initiated at different levels, with stakeholders advocating for the law to be consistent with the Paris Principles in order to reinforce credibility, transparency, impartiality and independence of the Commission, which can effectively fulfil its constitutional mandate to promote and protect human rights.

36. The current mandate of OHCHR-Nepal expires on 9 June 2010. OHCHR-Nepal has proposed a two-year extension and discussions with the Government are ongoing.

V. United Nations country team coordination

37. During the reporting period, work began on preparing a peace and development strategy for Nepal that seeks to identify how Nepal's development partners can best support the gains of the peace process over the coming three years. This exercise is led by the Resident Coordinator in coordination with UNMIN and the country team. The strategy is being prepared jointly with the international financial institutions and bilateral donors, in consultation with the Government and local partners. It will focus on the longer-term commitments and aspirations of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement, drawing at the same time on relevant development practices as they relate to peacebuilding support.

38. The United Nations Peacebuilding Fund, through the United Nations Peace Fund for Nepal, provided funding to support all stages of the process of discharging the disqualified Maoist army personnel verified as minors and late recruits. UNICEF, UNDP, the United Nations Population Fund and the International Labour Organization have launched a rehabilitation programme for up to 4,000 dischargees consisting of counselling and reintegration packages, including options for education, vocational training, micro/small enterprise development and health services training. To date, some 838 of those discharged have enquired about support through the United Nations toll-free number, and 547 have so far been referred to service providers to begin training programmes. The Governments of Norway and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland provided an additional $8.5 million to the United Nations Peace Fund for Nepal in late 2009 to support this phase of the discharge and rehabilitation process.

39. Under the aegis of the United Nations global Rule of Law Coordination and Resource Group, a country pilot was launched in Nepal in March. This group brings together OHCHR-Nepal, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, the United Nations Development Programme, UNICEF, UNMIN and the United Nations Development Fund for Women. It aims to develop a comprehensive, coherent and coordinated strategy for United Nations support to the rule of law. The initiative is backstopped by an inter-agency team at the headquarters level. A mapping of existing rule of law activities in Nepal is currently under way to inform this process.

40. The United Nations Mine Action Team continued its support to the Government's efforts to meet its commitment under the Comprehensive Peace Agreement to clear all remaining minefields in Nepal. By 19 March, 26 of the 53 minefields had been cleared by the Nepal Army clearance teams with technical support from the Team, and the remaining half are scheduled to be cleared by the end of 2011. A total of 52,617 improvised explosive devices and other dangerous items have been destroyed by the Team since these demolitions began in 2007. In February, the Team supported an intergovernmental working group led by the Ministry of Peace and Reconstruction to draft a three-year national mine action strategy for Nepal outlining objectives in the areas of coordination, clearance, risk education, victim assistance and advocacy through 2012.

41. The United Nations country team continued its support to the constitution-making process through the reporting period. Assistance included technical support to informal caucuses of members of the Constituent Assembly (women, indigenous peoples, Dalits) and furthering dialogue between and among community organizations on constitutional issues. Individual agencies provided targeted advice within the parameters of their mandates, such as the analysis of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees of the proposed citizenship provisions from a perspective of applicable international standards. Over 40,000 visitors from the Constituent Assembly, civil society and the general public have visited the UNDP-supported Centre for Constitutional Dialogue. The Centre has to date organized 350 workshops and seminars on issues around the constitution-building process.

42. Nearly half of Nepal's districts are experiencing food shortages, and an estimated 2.5 million people face extreme food insecurity, mainly in the mid- and far-western hill and mountain regions. Rural households in Nepal are particularly vulnerable with more than an estimated 70 per cent of household budgets being allocated to the purchase of food, while dependence on subsistence agriculture remains high. To address these vulnerabilities, the 2010 Nepal Humanitarian Transition Appeal was launched on 10 March. It seeks $123.5 million to provide life-saving assistance and reduce the vulnerability of more than 3.4 million people across the country. In light of the protracted winter drought, Nepal received $6 million from the United Nations Central Emergency Response Fund at the end of 2009, which allowed the World Food Programme to provide food to more than 302,000 people. Also during the reporting period, the Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations began implementation of a $10.6 million European Union Food Facility project to provide seeds and agriculture training to 106,000 of the most vulnerable households to improve their food security.

VI. Observations

43. Political parties in Nepal face an accumulation of unimplemented peace process commitments and a fast-approaching constitutional deadline, placing the process as a whole at a critical juncture. At the core of the stalemate rest disagreements over integration and rehabilitation, certain key aspects of a new constitution, and power-sharing. These appear to be compounded by mutual mistrust, insufficient political will and weak mechanisms for the implementation of past agreements.

44. Other challenges to the fragile peace process include continuing disaffection among traditionally marginalized groups, the heightened visibility of the opposition to some agreed tenets including federalism, republicanism and secularism, and the widespread threats of fresh confrontation. Only adherence to existing commitments and a negotiated political settlement will offer a satisfactory outcome for the future of the country. I call on the political party leaders to redouble their efforts in this regard.

45. In January, the Government of Nepal sought the extension of the mandate of UNMIN, recognizing its important role in providing support and facilitation to Nepal's nationally driven peace process. The Government underlined that the work of the Special Committee related to the integration and the rehabilitation of the former Maoist combatants would be completed before 28 May, the deadline for the

new constitution. On that basis, an extension of the mandate of UNMIN until 15 May 2010 was requested, and was accepted by the Council.

46. The deadline was regarded by many observers as too ambitious. At the time, major critical aspects of the action plan on integration and rehabilitation had not been agreed, and to a significant extent this remains the case today. Outstanding issues of disagreement include the number of Maoist army personnel to be integrated into the security forces, in particular the Nepal Army, the modalities for integration, and the options that can be offered to those to be rehabilitated into civilian life. As described earlier, intensive discussions are continuing on these issues as well as on the key constitutional issues and power-sharing.

47. My Representative continues to convey the strong desire of the Council and the United Nations to see the parties move forward in the implementation of the agreements they have reached, with the aim of adopting a new constitution and ensuring long-term peace, stability and prosperity. At the same time, the United Nations recognizes that a positive resolution of the various complex aspects of the peace process requires patience and sustained effort. The Council has called on the parties to take full advantage of the expertise and readiness of UNMIN to support the peace process to facilitate the completion of outstanding aspects of its mandate. The Mission seeks an exit that follows the resolution of the future of the former Maoist army personnel.

48. Throughout 2009, UNMIN encouraged the parties to consider measures that would give the Mission an exit strategy, and to accompany any extension request with a realistic and time-bound roadmap for progress. Following the adoption of Security Council resolution 1909 (2010), UNMIN resumed discussions with the political leaders, followed by two lengthy consultations in March and April dedicated to reviewing options for the handover of the mandated role of UNMIN.

49. These frank, closed-door "review meetings" took place among senior leaders of the three main political parties. While not representing official party or government positions, the feedback from these senior leaders, following consultations with their party leaderships, indicated a clear desire to see UNMIN play a more effective role consistent with the current needs of the peace process. As mentioned in paragraph 11 of the present report, a number of specific areas for greater support from UNMIN have been put forward. These are important functions that UNMIN can and should usefully fulfil within its existing mandate.

50. In January, the Government informed the Security Council that the goal of a peaceful and stable Nepal required an enhanced level of support, understanding and encouragement from the international community. It remains my intention to see UNMIN successfully complete its work at the earliest. It is regrettable that it has not been possible to reflect in this report the official position of the Government of Nepal and the parties as regards the possible extension of the mandate of UNMIN as no formal communication had been received on the matter at the time of writing. Should the Government of Nepal, in consultation with the parties, request an extension of the mandate of UNMIN, I would recommend that the Security Council respond positively. I expect that such a request would include clear indications as to the areas in which UNMIN should strengthen its support in order to both expedite progress in the peace process and to enable the Mission to complete its mandated tasks.

51. It would be my earnest appeal to the Government and parties to resolve without delay the remaining political impediments and to take concrete steps towards the fulfilment of commitments on the basis of clear benchmarks and timelines and through a structured process of consultation and dialogue. They should continuously review the implementation of their commitments in all areas. I also wish to underline the critical importance of developing and systematically implementing a thorough, realistic and well-prepared plan for the integration and the rehabilitation of the former Maoist army personnel, with which UNMIN stands ready to assist.

52. I would like to convey my appreciation to the members of the Security Council and other Member States for their continued support to Nepal and to the work of the United Nations in support of the peace process, and to thank my Representative, Karin Landgren, her staff and partner organizations in Nepal for their dedicated efforts.